(c) whether the fifth Antarctica expedition plans undertaken an indepth study of earlier incomplete research projects or any new research programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Scientific achievements of the last four Indian expeditions to Antarctica include the following:

(i) Creation of the requisite infrastructure and facilities in Antarctica and the establishment of a permanent station in Antarctica for scientific work throughout the year;

(ii) Establishment of communication links between India and Antarctica through satellite and HF;

(iii) Continued investigations in various disciplines of Polar Science;

(iv) By virtue of the scientific work done during the expeditions, India acquired the status of a Consultative Party in the Antarctic Treaty mechanism and has also been unanimously elected as a Member of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

(b) Some of the notable scientific findings include:

(i) Occurrences of geomagnetic storms in Antarctica;

(ii) Unusual radiowave transmission characteristics in Antarctica;

(iii) Peculiar chemical characteristics of the seas around Antarctica;

(iv) Occurrence of an undersea mount;

(v) Knowledge of the weather pattern during the winter period using an automatic, solar-powered, unmanned weather station established by India during the first expedition.

(vi) New microoragnisms which could have imprints of the primitive cell as they lived in the past during the glacial age at sub-zero conditions.

(c) Yes, Sir. The planning and preparation of the fifth expedition is under way and will take into account both the aspects.

Loss of Forest Cover

2781. SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV:
PROF B. RAMACHANDRA RAO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the area under forestry cover in the country the rate of loss and area planted during the last three years;

(b) whether Government have any long range plan to cover earge barren lands with forests; and

(c) if so, what target has been fixed upto the end of 2000 AD and during the Seventh Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI VIR SEN): (a) The area registered as forest in the country is 74.87 million hectares as on 31-12-1983. The annual rate of loss of forest cover during the last five years, on account of diversion of forest land to non-forest use under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is about 6500 ha. No information is available in regard to forest cover lost on account of illicit felling and encroachment. The total area planted during the last five years is 4.65 million hectares.

(b) and (c) Government have set up a National Wastelands Development Board with the object of bringing 5 million hectares of land every year under fuelwood and fodder plantations. No target has been fixed for the period ending 2000 AD. The Seventh Five Year Plan proposals are yet to be finalised.

Air services from Nagpur to Madras, Delhi and Calcutta

2782. SHRI S. W. DHABE:
SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to restart

the daily Boeing Services connecting Nagpur with Madras, Delhi and Calcutta; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to strengthen Sonegaon airport facilities and have a direct or hopping flight connecting Nagpur, which is the second capital of the Maharashtra State to various important cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Nagpur is at present connected with Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Hyderabad and Bhubaneshwar. Indian Airlines has at present no plans to introduce more services to and from Nagpur. A provision has been made in the Seventh Five Year Plan to improve Sonegaon airport through—

(i) Extension and modification of the existing terminal building;

(ii) Strengthening of runway and associated pavements to LCN 90;

(iii) Augmentation of electric and water supply; and

(iv) Repairs to approach road.

Pollution due to proposed second unit of Tata Electric Company

2783. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have accorded permission to Tata Electric Company to set up second 500 MW unit (Unit No. 6) at Trombay; and

(b) if so, whether it would lead to further pollution in the already congested area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI VIR SEN): (a) and (b) Yes. Sir. The approval for installation of second 500 MW unit (Unit No.6) has been granted on the condition that only non-polluting fuel, such as LSHS/fuel oil/gas will be used as feed-stock.

2784. **[Transferred to the 21st August, 1985.]**

Fall in Air India traffic after 'Kanishka' disaster

2785. SHRI F. M. KHAN:
SHRI GAYA CHAND BHUYAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Air India traffic has declined after the disastrous explosion in the Air India plane 'Kanishka' recently;

(b) what was the revenue earned during the month of July, 1985 as compared to that for last three months; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be is the affirmative, what action has been taken by Government to improve the position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) The analysis of Air India's total passenger uplifts in July, 1985 indicates a marginal (2.5 per cent) decline in traffic over the previous year. The Corporation carried a total of 1,51,686 passengers in July, 1985 as against a total of 1,55,685 passengers in July, 1984. However, this decline in traffic may not be attributable to the crash of 'Kanishka' on 23rd June, 1985, as some of the Corporation's major routes, viz. India U.S.A., India-U.K. and India-Japan routes have exhibited a declining traffic trend since April, 1985.

(b) The total revenue earned during the month of July, 1985 has been provisionally estimated at Rs. 68.41 crores as compared to the provisional revenue of Rs. 73.79 crores per month estimated for April—June, 1985.

(c) On the major routes, Air India has redesigned its marketing strategies to